**History of Brooms**

**I believe brooms have been around as long as cave dwellers.  We like our comfort. Sweeping is even mentioned in the Bible in both old and new testament.  Early traditional brooms were called besom brooms and made of birch twigs tied to a handle of hazelwood.   It represents the air element and spiritual as well as both male (the handle) and female (the brush).  It physically cleans as well as drives away negative energy. Brooms are placed inside the house with the bristles up to ward off negative energy and to protect the home and all who live within.  It can also be found hanging over the door with the bristles facing in the direction of opening of the door.**

**Jumping the broom is an Afro-American tradition brought from Africa.  The Metis people of Canada have a broom dancing tradition of fast footwork and jumping.  Janism monks and nuns carry a small broom to gently push aside ants and small animals.  In 1797 a Mass. Farmer made a sorgum broom for his wife.  They became very popular. Flat brooms of broom corn were invented by the Shakers in the 19th century.**

**Rich witches rode horses while the poorer ones rode their brooms.  The first “official” record that documents the claim of flying on a broom stick was recorded in 1453.  The claim was made in a confession by a male witch named Guillaume Elelin. During the Burning Times there were hiding places in the broom handle to hide wands and oils and feathers used in ritual. That added to the energy of the intent that the broom was used for. Early accounts tell of decorating our brooms with flowers of the season tied on with some type of decorative string or later using colored ribbon.  A practice that is continued today.**